

■ MARINERS

'It's part of people's livelihood and commerce'



FROM PAGE 1

A choral group made up of members from three community choirs led by Robert Weller, while Rev. Rob Hurkmans provided prayers and a benediction.

The ceremony concluded with a 10-minute video, "From Port Colborne to Port Weller," which documented the time-lapsed journey of a ship down the Welland Canal throughout the course of a day.

Mayor Vance Badaway said the ceremony was about the community coming together to give thanks, prayer and blessing to all those sailing the Great Lakes and abroad

EDDIE CHAU Staff Photo
Christie Boychuk performs a ceremonial dance to entertain the more than 200 people in attendance at the Mariners Celebration Sunday at St. James and St. Brendan Anglican Church.

during this year's shipping season.

"We demonstrate our appreciation for the contribution that the shipping industry makes to our community," Badaway said. "Equally as important, are the contributions those that work within the industry make to enable operational excellence."

Hurkmans said the Mariners ceremony has been a tradition in Port Colborne for many years and has been a great opportunity for the municipality and the church in the last few. While still a relative newcomer to Port Colborne, Hurkmans said to the community the canal is more than just part of the city's charm.

"It's part of people's livelihood and commerce," he said. "People aren't just here because they are charmed by the city. They are here because they realize how important the industry is to Port Colborne."

■ BUSINESS

Shoppers encouraged to descend on a targeted store

FROM PAGE 1

This is known as a cash mob.

Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce is teaming up with the Port Colborne Downtown BIA to encourage residents of the two south Niagara municipalities to shop local while boosting the economy.

Greg Poisson, co-owner of Canalside restaurant and spokesman for the event, said the idea was adopted from the cash mob that was organized in Buffalo,

Instead of going to big box stores for discounts we should shop locally first."

Greg Poisson, co-owner of Canalside restaurant

N.Y., last August by blogger Christopher Smith. Smith's concept is for shoppers to spend \$10 to \$20 at a local business, bring your receipt to a partnering restaurant and enjoy a meal with fellow

members to celebrate community participation.

"We want to get citizens to really consider shopping locally to help our small- and medium-sized businesses," Poisson said.

"Instead of going to big box stores for discounts we should shop locally first. Make people aware of what their city has to offer so they spend \$10 to \$20 at a local business, bring your receipt to a partnering restaurant and enjoy a meal with fellow

3 p.m. at Family Discount Depot, 212 King St. This business was announced this past Monday on the chamber of commerce's website (www.pcwchamber.com) and on the chamber's cash mob page on Facebook (search PCW CashMob).

Poisson said the cash mob events will take place the last Saturday of each month for the remainder of the year. The participating businesses will be picked via a voting system on the cash mob Facebook site.



EDDIE CHAU Staff Photo
Greg Poisson, co-owner of Canalside restaurant and member of Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce, is hoping residents get on board the Port Colborne Cashmob which takes place March 24.

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portraits

■ ENTERTAINMENT: Best attendance yet for library programs

March break events sell out

ALLAN BENNER
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — After years of working for the township's public library, Leanne Good has never seen a March break like this one.

Nearly every event she organized to keep kids busy during their week away from school have sold out, said Good, the library's programmer.

Good can't explain the interest in the activities this year.

"Usually when the weather's nice, we get less people," she said, adding the weather has been exceptionally nice this year.

"I've been here six years and this is the first time we've run out of room in all of our programs," she said during a visit by Mad Science's Anna Boni, who taught children to make slime last week.

Several events, including the Mad Science presentation, were held in the nearby Wainfleet firefighters community hall to allow more children to participate.

Good said the library added a few new events to the lineup of activities this year, including a teddy bear sleepover Wednesday. Children will bring their stuffed animal to the library, tuck them in for the night and return the next morning to pick them up and have a pajama party.

"It's our first year doing it, but other libraries have done it in the past," Good said.

Only the stuffed animals actually get to spend the night among the library books, she pointed out.

And just in case the children can't bear to part with their teddy bears for the night, she said the library will have a few extras that



ABOVE: From left, David and Nathan Vanderwilt hold up some slime they made during a Mad Science presentation organized by Wainfleet library. It was one of several events planned to keep kids busy during March break.

RIGHT: Arwyn McDonald carefully mixes shaving cream and paint to make some artwork.

the children can adopt for the event.

Other events include a Lego day Wednesday, a reptile show Thursday and Friday the library will have a Hunger Games-themed party for older kids — a

week before the movie is released in theatres.

Good said the next event planned at the library is a knitting seminar in April, through which participants can learn to create "frilly scarves."

More information about that program is available by calling the library at 905-699-1277.

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ourview

Remembering Tyler

They say time heals all wounds. I for one am not sure it is true.

Do not underestimate the calendar. The calendar has a role in this.

At times, we take it for granted as simply a marker of days. But it does so much more. It reminds us of the start and finish of seasons. It reminds us of comings and goings — some of which are welcome, some not. In our lives, it reminds us of birthdays, anniversaries and weddings and passings.

Tuesday, March 20, is a choice example. The calendar will not let us forget its significance.

It is the end of winter and the start of spring. Those who calculate such things tell us that astronomical spring here will start at 11:43 a.m. on that date.

But March 20 is also a date of infamy in Port Colborne. Hometown boy, now hometown hero, Cpl. Tyler Crooks was killed in action in Afghanistan on this day three years ago.

Crusie, as Tyler was affectionately known to friends and to well-wishers, was serving with the Canadian Expeditionary Force (EDF) exploded next the end of foot patrol about 40 km west of Kandahar City. It exploded shortly after 6 a.m. It also killed a comrade, Master Cpl. Scott Vernell of Sault Ste. Marie.

By the calendar, three years have gone by already: March 20, 2009, to March 20, 2012.

With the approach of the third anniversary date, yellow ribbons are appearing again in Port Colborne.

Do not ignore yellow ribbons. Yellow ribbons will not let us forget.

In the military context, they symbolize support of our troops. It is important that physical manifestation of remembrance does not wane, even as days, weeks, months and years pass.

A war-time death can bring a community together like no other event. A family grieves and the community closes ranks and provides support and understanding and tenderness and warmth — friends and strangers grieve with the bereaved family.

Love transcends time, parental love especially so and this close-knit family's love especially so. Occasional e-mail correspondence over three years with Karen Crooks, Tyler's mom, provided this insight into their lives:

The act of remembrance of Tyler's death has become a way of remembrance in Port Colborne, says Mayor Vincen Badaway. The yellow ribbons in front of city hall are one way of remembrance, another is the lowering of our country's flag in Tyler's honour.

Badaway was eloquent in conveying thoughts about Tyler's death and how it has affected the people in his hometown.

"Although words alone cannot convey our sorrow, we stand shoulder to shoulder with the Crooks family in remembrance of Tyler ... He is a true Canadian hero and his legacy will be everlasting."

COLUMN

Non-Sporting Dogs of Group 6

When the dog breeds were divided up into groups there were six groups to choose from. Dogs were either Sporting Dogs, Hounds, Working Dogs, Herding Dogs, Toy. But some breeds of dogs were left over because they didn't fit any of these groups. So another group was created for them and it was called the Non-Sporting Group.

Dogs in this group came from many countries and were all different sizes and shapes. Some of these dogs were bigger versions of some of the Toy breeds. People liked the look of these toy dogs but wanted a larger dog. So we have some breeds that come in three sizes: Toy, Miniature and Standard-small, medium and large.

The Xoloitzcuintli (Xoloquisquintli) or Mexican Hairless Dog is one of these breeds. He was originally a Toy Dog and the other two sizes are in the Non-Sporting Group. The only difference is the size and the weight of these dogs. The miniature Mexican Hairless must be over 10 pounds and the standard Mexican Hairless are over 20 pounds. All three sizes need special care to keep their skin soft and protected from the sun and cold.

The very popular Poodles come in three sizes as well. But in this case the largest Poodle was the original dog from Germany. They were bred to retrievers



Sandie Bingley
IT'S A DOGS LIFE

that went into water to bring back the game. These dogs started out being around 15 inches tall at their back but have been developed over larger and today are about 22-26 inches tall. The name Poodle came from the German word Puder or water dog. Their coat was kept short so they could swim properly. Retriever dogs of fur were kept longer on their joints and tail for protection in cold water. This coat style became so popular that it is the

official show coat for showing Poodles even today.

These dogs could not be smaller than 15 inches a small size appealed to some people so the Miniature Poodle was developed from the too small Standard Poodles. They had to be between 10 inches and 15 inches in size. Finally a Toy size was developed and had to be smaller than 10 inches. All three sizes look the same and can have the same colours. The third breed with 3 sizes is the American Eskimo Dog. All three sizes are white with cream or biscuit colours also allowed. They have a long thick coat which needs regular brushing to keep

them from matting. All three sizes have a fox head with upright pointed ears and a bushy tail that tucks up over their backs. The Miniatures are between 12-15 inches tall while the Standards are 15-19 inches tall. The Toy size will be under 12 inches. All three sizes are family oriented and love children but they can be wary of strangers.

More than 700 years ago Lord Stamford of England saw some dogs belonging to a butcher, chasing and tormenting a bull. He found it so enterprising that he offered to provide a suitable field if the butcher would supply his dogs to fight bulls on a regular basis. The "sport" of bull-baiting was born and the Bulldogs were bred to fight the bulls with courage and determination. They would run to the bull and not let go. If the bull managed to toss the dogs up into the air then the owners were allowed to run into the field or ring and catch their dog then turn him loose again. The horns on the bull were

covered in leather wrappings so they couldn't gore the dogs. Finally in 1835 the so called sport was declared to be cruel and illegal. The bulldogs became the British love their bulldogs and saved the dogs. The Bulldogs were developed into the lovable, friendly, good natured, chunky dogs of today.

Next Time: More Dogs of the Non-Sporting Group

COLUMN

Off the beaten path are other gems

Some of the best experiences and sights come from those found off the beaten path. This is especially true while traveling.

If given the opportunity to travel to Rome, you are most likely imagining yourself making a dash at the Trevi Fountain, taking pictures inside the Colosseum, and admiring artwork while touring the Vatican.

While all of this is what people should do when visiting Rome, there are many things that cannot be learned from your travel agent.

If you have a soft spot for literature, a must-see is the Keats Shellemy museum located on the right side of the Spanish Steps. Original letters, poetry and even locks of hair are featured from the



Michèle Pressé
CANADIAN GIRL,
ITALIAN LIVING

brilliant minds of Oscar Wilde, Mary Shelley, Lord Byron, and many other literary geniuses from the 19th century. Percy Shelley and John Keats called this their home for three months until Keats' death on February 23, 1821. The museum is open from Monday to Friday and admission is 4.50 Euros per person.

Something to put on your to-do list is to attend a concert in a Roman Catholic Church. Sant'Agnese in Agone is located in the famous Piazza Navona and offers

a chamber music concert every Friday (excluding July and August). Although tickets are considered pricey (12 Euros), you won't find the experience of a talented Italian orchestra combined with faith and frescos anywhere but Rome.

You don't have to be religious in order to stay in a villa in Rome. The website www.momentsvillas.com offers a list of different convents which are open to tourists. Prices vary, but rooms include comfortable conditions and private bathrooms. You may want to consider staying for just one night as many monasteries have curfews. Some also encourage you to participate in prayer and dinner with the nuns and monks.

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■ PRESSÉ

Asking for local recommendations can provide a unique experience

FROM PAGE 4

For those looking to enjoy a night out, head over to the Villa, the ancient neighbourhood of Trastevere. What makes Rivendita interesting is that it's a bookshop and a bar. A strange (or perhaps genius) combination, but very popular with the locals. What also makes Rivendita interesting is its famous chocolate shot. The shot glass itself is made out of dark chocolate and is filled with a milky liqueur. Whipped cream, cinnamon, and shavings of chocolate are decorated on top, and to enjoy, you pop the entire

thing in your mouth.

Every city offers its own interesting experiences that can be easily filled following a guidebook. The next time you venture off to a foreign destination, I recommend talking to a local via the Internet to find out what they recommend for a fun and unique experience in their city.

Michelle Press is an 18-year-old Port Colborne resident living and working in Rome, Italy until June 2012. She is a Lakeshore Catholic graduate who hopes to pursue her journalism degree next fall.

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Sandy White

■ FIRE DEPARTMENT ACQUIRES THERMAL CAMERA



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

Gord Davies, left, past president of Wainfleet Volunteer Firefighter Association, and Jason Mous, right, association president, show Mayor April Jeffs a thermal camera the association purchased for the fire department.

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ALONG THE LAKESHORE

ONGOING

Volunteers are needed for leadership positions with 2nd Port Colborne Scout, which includes Beavers (5 to 7), Cubs (8 to 10), Scouts (11-13) and Venturers (14-17). If you would like to be part of giving children a wonderful scouting experience, contact Bob at 9805-834-9599 or email blipport@gmail.com.

AT PORT COLBORNE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Children's art instruction with Small Hands Studio. Spring Session begins Monday, March 19th. From 6:30 p.m. For program description, cost and registration please contact Kelly Davies #905.834.8483 or by e-mail:

www.smallhandsstudio.com

Knitting: Spring Session begins Tuesday evenings, March 20th from 7:30 p.m. and Thursday afternoons March 29th from 1:30-3:00 p.m. For more information on the Knitting Club schedule of classes or to join the Knitters' Club, call Vicki Fretz at 905-835-5373.

Library ebook & audiobook DOWNLOADS SEMINARS: Wednesday

March 28th. From 10:11-11 a.m. Free demonstrations on how to select, check out, and download ebooks & audiobooks from the Library site to your home computer, and transfer them to a portable device. Free. Space is limited. Pre-register at the Library.

INTRODUCTION TO GENEALOGY with Barb Ranshaw, Thursdays, March 29th. From 6:30-7:30 p.m. Cost is \$2.00 per session. For more information or to register, contact Barb at 905-834-1453 or by email at sunpower@coze.co

Tot-Time with Stacey, Thursday, March 29th. From 10:11-11 a.m. Stories, crafts and games, for children ages 2 to 4, with their parents/ caregivers. Cost is \$1.00 per child per week. Pre-register at the Library.

Kids' Yoga with Nadia Esposito. For ages 4 to 12. Tuesdays from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. 10 week session beginning Tues., April 10th to June 12th. Cost is \$40.00 pre-paid, or \$5.00 a class for drop in. To register call Nadia at 905-329-9841.

Films for Seniors, presented on the first Wednesday of the month, September to June, at 1:30 p.m. Free admission! Free refreshments!

One-on-One Computer Lessons. Saturday mornings at the Library. \$10.00 per person per one-hour lesson. Pre-registration required. Lessons geared toward your interests. Topics include: Email, Facebook, Twitter, blogging, creating simple websites, and more. Call the Library at 905-834-6512 for an appointment.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church
April 5 – 8 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service with Communion
April 6 – 9 a.m. Good Friday Service
April 8 – 7:45 a.m. Easter Pancake Breakfast, 9 a.m. Easter – Divine Service with Communion

St. Theresa of Lisieux Church
March 31 – 4:15 – 4:30 p.m. Reconciliation, 5 p.m. Passion (Palm) Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
April 1 – 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Holy Week reconciliation
April 2, 3, 4 – following the 8 a.m. Mass

Mass
Easter Triduum
Holy Thursday: Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper
April 5 – 7 p.m. Followed by Adoration until 11 p.m.
Good Friday: Commemoration of the Lord's Passion and Crucifixion
April 6 – 3 p.m.
Holy Saturday: Easter Vigil
Celebration of the Lord's Resurrection
April 7 – 8 p.m.
Easter Sunday: Eucharistic Celebration of the Lord's Resurrection
April 8 – 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

St. Patrick's Church
Holy Thursday
April 5 – 7:30 p.m. Mass
Good Friday
April 6 – 2 p.m. The Lord's Passion & Communion, 4 p.m. The Lord's Passion and Communion, 6:30 p.m. The Stations of the Cross
Holy Saturday
April 7 – 11 a.m. Blessing of the Easter Food, 8 p.m. – The Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday
April 8 – 7 a.m., 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Mass

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■ **LOWBANKS BLAZE:** 'We're in shock. Everything's gone'

Volunteer firefighter loses home

MATT DAY
QMI Agency Niagara

LOWBANKS — Jack Roseboom knows all too well how a ravaging fire can devastate a home and all the precious items left inside.

The volunteer firefighter for the Haldimand County Fire Department has battled blazes before, but never did he think he would be on the other end of things, watching as his

home and all his material possessions inside were held at mercy by an inferno.

"We're in shock; everything's gone," Roseboom said one day after a fire ripped apart his 2889 North Shore Dr. home in Lowbanks last week. "We're OK financially because we have insurance and all that stuff, but all our memorabilia is gone. It's just gone."

see FIRE | page 8



MATT DAY QMI Agency Niagara

Haldimand County firefighters sift through the charred remains of a North Shore Dr. home in Lowbanks. A fire that started in the carport the previous evening caused \$160,000 damage to the house and destroyed two cars inside the carport, including a Ford Mustang. No one was injured in the blaze as the home's occupants escaped safely.

The Healthy Cupboard Leaf Source STOPS PAIN WITHIN DAYS!

"It works! I'll take another two bottles please!"

This coming from a customer who had tried every other natural remedy under the sun in the past few years to take away her pain. Ian, the owner of The Healthy Cupboard couldn't believe his ears. He had finally found the perfect product for his customer's troubles. This is the story of a healthy food supplement she dreamt about, a natural product that receives so many outstanding testimonial on such a wide variety of health issues. "I had recommended a new product called LeafSource, which we recently started carrying. We have had tremendous success with this product, and almost everyone we've recommended it to over the last few months has come back and thanked us over and over again" said Ian. Before trying LeafSource, the woman had complained about her ongoing joint pain and was at her wit's end. Although she had experienced some relief through the numerous natural remedies she had tried over the years, the pain would never fully go away. "She returned to my store, in tears, less than a week after buying LeafSource. She didn't know what to make of this product, but she had a bottle of capsules left and she took just within a few days of taking LeafSource her pain started to disappear, and within a week it was completely gone - as if it was never there," Ian goes on. "This coming from a woman whose painful joints and ongoing sciatica were so bad just one year earlier, that the pain was unbearable but now has completely subsided." By now you are probably wondering what is LeafSource and why is it so effective? LeafSource is a 100% natural product derived from a proprietary organic mineral composite with over ten years of university research. LeafSource helps regulate the inflammatory process and the body's

ability to repair itself. The vast majority (70 - 90%) of the population over the age of 50 have joint problems — often called osteoarthritis. This is due to the natural (or unnatural) wear and tear on joint tissue that develops through the aging process. With joint inflammation, movement is limited and pain can be constant. LeafSource seems to have the ability to help people get their mobility and zest for life back. Millions of people seek treatment for their joint and/or inflammation problems by resorting to expensive, toxic prescription drugs (i.e. NSAIDS) with multiple side effects. These range from nausea and vomiting, serious intestinal disorders (bleeding, gas, pain) and even kidney and liver failure. Isn't it too high a price to pay for a little pain? LeafSource is a safe alternative to those toxic and expensive anti-inflammatory drugs that cause more problems than they solve. There are absolutely no side effects and it doesn't interfere with any other medications. Controlled experiments and observations have revealed that LeafSource is a potent anti-inflammatory that has been shown to bring a reduction to inflammation and pain within a few days. People notice great results in terms of more energy and less pain by taking anywhere from 2 to 6 capsules/day. Typical maintenance is usually 1 capsule twice daily. This product gets results! LeafSource is scientifically validated through more than 10 years of research at 4 universities, including the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Mayo Clinic, University of Alberta, its' anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant and pain reducing ability, it has also been shown to improve the performance of your daily nutrition and vitamin programs. It helps increase the absorption of vital nutrients, which in turn helps these nutrients work better. Better absorption = better results! It's almost as if they have become supercharged! LeafSource has also been

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shown to help enhance energy levels, improve intestinal health, strengthen hair, skin and nails and improve immune function. To see some go from intense pain to a new lease on life within a week is truly incredible. Imagine being able to move freely without pain. Who wouldn't want to get out of bed in the morning with more energy? It's amazing how much of this stuff we take for granted, until it's gone. Ian has been recommended that LeafSource be taken with other natural joint products in order to help them work better and provide even faster relief. One of the things I hear most often from people who have tried LeafSource is they just plain feel better, have more energy and less pain. We're so confident, we guarantee LeafSource 100%! That alone should be enough to try this incredible product."

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Give Yourself a Break Contest WINNER announced by The Verge Insurance Group



Mark Sherk, President of The Verge Insurance Group delivers the \$5000 Travel Voucher to John Gregory of Virgil, Ontario as the winner of their Give Yourself a Break Contest. John dealt with Reimer Verge Insurance Brokers in Virgil. Representing Reimer Verge are Sue Halliday, Broker (far left) and Lorna MacInnis, Branch Manager. Thank you to all those that participated! Congratulations John Gregory! Happy Travels!

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\$160,000 damage to house

FROM PAGE 7

At about 5 p.m. Sunday, five stations with the Halton Hills County Fire Department were called to the scene, with assistance from Wainfleet's fire department for use of a tanker truck, after Rosebrook, and his wife, Cathy, noticed the fire from inside their home. They then escaped without injury and called 911.

When emergency crews arrived, they found the west side of the house completely engulfed in flames.

Rick Smith, deputy fire chief for the Halton Hills County Fire Department, said the fire began in the carport area before winds coming off of Lake Erie helped it spread to the living area.

Firefighters remained on scene until 12:30 a.m. to make sure the fire was extinguished.

Damage to the house is estimated at \$160,000, not including the loss of two vehicles parked inside the garage, including a Ford Mustang.

I was happy to see they got out, but I just feel so very bad for them. I can't even imagine losing everything."

Mary Moore, neighbour

The Rosebrooks' neighbour is 15 years. Mary Moore said she first saw smoke coming from the back of the house just before 5 p.m. and by the time she had put on her jacket to go back outside, the fire was out of control.

"It was just going right through the garage. I was very, very concerned. I was worried to see they got out, but I just feel so very bad for them. I can't even imagine losing everything."

A 70-year-old man who rented out an apartment at the home has also been left homeless.



**REAL
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■ **ROTARY:** RYLA fees absorbed by local clubs

Leadership program for young adults

InPort News Staff

PONT COLBORNE — Rotarians want to help young adults better prepare themselves for the workforce.

Rotary Clubs across Niagara and Western New York (District 7090) are searching for young adults to take part in the Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA) program June 10-16 at SUNY Brockport in Brockport, N.Y.

The week-long personal development seminar for young adults aged 19 to 25 who are attending post-secondary school or recently finished school, will help give them confidence and leadership to excel in the workplace.

There will be 40 to 45 people picked for the experience. Those chosen will live in a dorm at SUNY and work together for a week in an intensive environment of communication and learning for personal development and self assessment. The group will study group dynamics, team development and career development. The program is designed to give leadership training and experience. The

week will include lectures and discussion periods with professional facilitators.

There will also be recreation time and many friendships gained.

Rotary will pay for chosen applicants to participate.

The clubs are looking for applicants who demonstrate community leadership ability, but applicants do not have to be a member of a club, president or captain of a team. The ideal candidate has good character, a constructive attitude and a desire to share with others and is someone who will benefit from a concentrated exercise in leadership, communications and personal development.

To apply, contact your local Rotary Club or download the application form at www.ryla7090.com.

To find information on your local Rotary Club, go to www.7090.org and click on the club location.

The deadline for the earlybird application is April 6, and the final deadline is, May 10.

For more information contact Craig Evans at Craigevans@royallepage.ca.

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■ WATER SPORTS: BoarderPass Niagara bringing boat-less system to Port Colborne

Smooth waters for wakeboarding agreement

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — It's a dream come true for local wakeboarders.

Port Colborne approved an operating agreement with BoarderPass Niagara to install a wakeboarding

cable facility at Sugarloaf Marina.

If all goes as planned, the facility, the first of its kind in Niagara — will be up and running by Victoria Day long weekend, May 19-21.

While traditional wakeboarding requires a boat and ample space on the



Makins

waterway, the boat-less cable system minimizes use of the area it's allotted. It works similarly to cable sys-

tems found on ski hills, only instead of pulling passengers up an incline, it's pulling them across the water.

The system will be installed south of the marina restaurant and in a westerly direction toward the boat ramp. Both installation and operation will be funded by

BoarderPass Niagara. The city, however, will receive a portion of the revenue for the system.

Tuesday, Port Colborne's manager of community services, Gary Makins, expressed his excitement over approval of the agreement.

He's looking forward to spreading the word of the innovative system as it gets up and running.

To help promote it, plans are in the works for a showcase event to be held during Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival, taking place this year from Aug. 3 to 6.

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MARCH BREAK



EDDIE CHAU Staff Photo

Mike London, a reptile expert from Reptile Kingdom, shows off a bearded dragon to about 70 children during a March break show at Wainfleet Firefighters Memorial Community Hall last week.

Reptile Kingdom a sellout event in Wainfleet

EDDIE CHAU
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — To the roughly 70 children who packed Wainfleet Firefighters' Memorial Community Hall last week, fear was just a four-letter word.

When Mike London, a reptile expert from Fonthill's Reptile Kingdom, pulled a tarantula out of a plastic container, the children looked on with intrigue while their parents covered away.

"This tarantula is harmless. It spins a web that's like silk," said London while pulling out a long strand of webbing from the arachnid's behind. "It's super smooth."

"Who wants to see more?" London asked.

"I do. I do," screamed one boy sitting in the front row.

London, with his assistant Justin Clarke, showed off a variety of reptiles and arachnids — which included bearded dragons, various snakes, lizards and spiders — during the show hosted by Wainfleet Public Library as part of its March break activities.

Reptile Kingdom provides an educational show that gives children a hands-on experience while learning about different animals that inhabit the earth.

Library programmer Leanne Good said the reptile event was a complete

sellout, as was much of this past week's March break events at the library.

Included: Mad Science, Legos at the Library, Storytime Sleepover and The Hunger Games.

"This is my seventh March break at the library and we've had so many people that we had to turn people away," Good said. "This (Reptile Kingdom) has been thus far the most popular event. It's been a great experience for the kids."

eddie.chau@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @EdChauTribune



EDDIE CHAU Staff Photo

Justin Clarke, a helper with Reptile Kingdom, lets children pet a snake during a March break reptile show at the Wainfleet Firefighters Memorial Community Hall last week.

■ **FOG:** One man extricated



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

Port Colborne Fire and Emergency Services and Niagara EMS paramedics work on a man extricated from a four-door Chevy Blazer at the scene of a multi-vehicle collision on Hwy. 3, between Lorraine and Snider Rds., in Port Colborne.

Three injured in six-car pileup

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Three people were transported to Welland hospital after a multi-car pileup in heavy fog on Hwy. 3 last week.

Firefighters, ambulance and police responded to the highway scene between Lorraine and Snider Rds. at about 8. The call first came out as a motor vehicle collision, but was upgraded minutes later as a serious collision with extrication required.

Anytime that happens when you're in fog, you can cross the centre line. That's what it appeared had happened."

Tom Cartwright, Port Colborne fire chief

Port Colborne fire Chief Tom Cartwright said the bend in the road combined with the heavy fog that blanketed much of south Niagara that evening likely contributed to the crash.

"There were five or six cars involved indirectly or in the middle of the mess, but they weren't necessarily all involved in the collision," he said. "With the fog, it was worse than

normal."

"When you've got a bend in the road, and anything that happens when you're in fog, you can cross the centre line. That's what it appeared had happened — someone crossed the centre line."

A truck driver on his way home to Welland said he was only driving 20 km/h down Hwy. 3 when he came upon the accident. His truck came up right behind a four-door Chevy Blazer, from which firefighters had to extract one of the occupants.

Firefighters and paramedics worked together to free the man from the truck.

The injured man was taken to Welland hospital. Two more people who were involved in the collision a little further west along the highway were also transported to Welland hospital.

"As far as I know there were three people who went to the hospital," Cartwright said, adding the victims were in stable condition when transported.

An air ambulance was requested at the scene but heavy fog prevented it from landing in the area.

OPP and Niagara Regional Police kept the highway closed as they investigated the collision.



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■ **HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTRE:** Port Colborne's YMCA deal could harm G&M Fitness, businessman says

Gym owner feeling out-muscled by city

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

POR COLBORNE — Gino Spada believes Port Colborne is sending him into a gunfight with a knife.

That's what council was told by the owner of G&M Fitness, who expressed his concern over the city's proposed partnership with the YMCA at the new Vale Health and Wellness Centre.

Spada said he was present to "defend his rightful place in the community," which he feels could be in jeopardy

should the Y move into its state-of-the-art fitness facility. Negotiations are still underway with the non-profit organization.

Spada was emotional as he spoke before a crowd of supporters who joined him in the audience. He outlined the support both he and his business have offered the community over the past 27 years and expressed his anger over what he called a move by the city that placed a knife in his back.

see GYM | page 15



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

Gino Spada, owner of G&M Fitness on King St., believes Port Colborne is bringing unfair competition into the city's fitness market with its proposed partnership with the YMCA at the new Vale Health and Wellness Centre.

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■ GYM

'You've thrown me into a gunfight with a knife'

FROM PAGE 14

"It's a tough industry to make money in," he said of the fitness business. "And Port Colborne has a less affluent, more rural demographic to work with."

Spada believes there's not enough interest in the lakeside city's fitness market to share clientele.

Competition has come to town in the past, but G&M has been able to survive because it's always "been a fair fight" on a level playing field, he said.

"I've come around," Spada doesn't think the competition headed to Port Colborne will offer him a fair shot at keeping his business up and running.

They do not play by the same rules, but they're in the same business."

Gino Spada, owner of G&M Fitness

And worst of all, should he have to move down, he'd still have to pay taxes that subsidize the very organization that ran him under, he said.

Because the YMCA is a non-profit organization and considered a charity, it's not expected to turn a profit. As long as it's located in a municipal building, it will not pay property taxes and will receive a subsidy from the city for its programming efforts.

"They do not play by the same rules, but they're in the same business," Spada said.

Spada said he would not be standing in council chambers if a private company "who would contribute to the tax base just as I am" was moving into the centre.

"You've thrown me into a gunfight with a knife," he told councillors. "Are we nothing more than collateral damage?"

While Spada did have the opportunity to submit a bid to run the fitness area at the new centre, he said it was not a financially viable option for a private entrepreneur

with expensive infrastructure commitments and a 3,500-square-foot space to oversee. The YMCA was the only organization that submitted a bid for the proposal.

Gino Makins, the city's manager of community services, welcomed Spada's concerns but said it's difficult to compare G&M Fitness with the YMCA. The subsidy received by the Y from the city is for overall operation of the entire warm side of the facility, not solely for the fitness centre, he stressed.

The facility will be run at a deficit, just as the city's existing recreation facilities are, Makins said. But through the partnership with the YMCA, the hope is to reduce that deficit and, in turn, the subsidy offered by the city through the mosaic of programming being provided.

Port Colborne pays \$150,000 to \$200,000 more in subsidy than comparable communities with health and wellness centres that are fully functioning with an array of programming, said city administrator officer Bob Bell. By introducing that programming, subsidy should ultimately be lessened, he added.

While lessening subsidy is key, the goal is also to raise awareness of healthy living in the community to encourage more people to make use of programs available to them and increase their fitness level, Makins said.

There are 36 health and wellness clubs in Niagara and only a handful of them are YMCA's.

"There are people out there co-existing with YMCA's," Makins said, adding he believes the same can happen in Port Colborne.

Mayor Vance Badaway asked that Spada submit a copy of his presentation for consideration while negotiations are underway with the YMCA.

Badaway made a recommendation, approved by council, that an open house be held once the draft agreement is completed to allow the public to provide input before it goes before council. Its date is yet to be determined.

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■ **PLANNING:** Latest CIP wins Port Colborne council approval

East waterfront strategy in place

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE —
Changes are coming to Port Colborne's east waterfront community.

City council adopted the East Waterfront Community Improvement Plan last week.

"All I have to say is thank you," Ward 2 Coun. Angie Desmarais said on behalf of all who live in the area and will benefit from the CIP.

Her Ward 2 counterpart Yvon Doucet also expressed his appreciation for seeing the

document come to fruition. The general boundaries of the CIP, one of several currently underway in Port Colborne, are Durham St. to the north, the western edge of the Vale property to the east and Lake Erie to the south. To the west, the boundary is a line running roughly parallel to the Welland

Canal, about 90 metres from the edge of the water, excluding the occupied portion of the Hamilton Marine property at the bottom of Welland St.

The city will take control of the east pier lands, once controlled by St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp., west of Nickel Beach and east of the

Welland Canal. Through the CIP, the land will be cleaned and greened to transform that portion of the waterfront

Recreational trails will be created, as well as picnic areas and open space that both residents and visitors to the city can make use of.

Along with revitalizing vacant industrial lands, the CIP will see work done to enhance the streetscape along Welland St. and offer incentives to encourage further enhancement.

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Notices

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Claimants against the Estate of GERALD GECICH, THOMPSON, of Port Colborne, in the Province of Ontario, who died on the 27th day of July, 2011, must be in our hands by April 20, 2012, after which date the assets of the Estate will be distributed.

Jim Munro, Estate Trustee
c/o MUNRO, OPATOVSKY
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